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*Ogilvie-Grant*. Ibis, 1912, pp. 112-118, pl. iii.  
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## VI.—Commentary on the new 'Hand-list of British Birds.'

By P. L. SCLATER, D.Sc., F.R.S.

IN the last page of 'The Ibis' for 1912 (p. 688), there was a notice of the publication of a new 'List of British Birds,' drawn up by four well-known ornithologists (Dr. Hartert, Mr. Jourdain, Mr. N. C. Ticehurst, and Mr. Witherby), and stated to be in exact accordance with the International

Rules of Zoological Nomenclature\*. It was also announced that some remarks on this important publication would be given in the next number of 'The Ibis.' The editor of the present series of our Journal has requested me to take this task off his hands, and I have agreed to do so, it being understood that the writer of these remarks is solely responsible for them, and not the editor of the Journal in which they are published.

On reading the "Introduction" to the new 'Hand-list' I was much surprised to find no mention of the Rules for Zoological Nomenclature prepared by the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Surely, before adopting wholesale the so-called "International" Rules, it would have been better to ascertain what our own zoologists had done in this matter. Yet the Rules of the British Association are utterly ignored, and it is even stated that the nomenclature of Birds has been "neglected for more than 150 years, although a requisite of the greatest importance." But this statement is by no means correct, as I shall proceed to shew.

When I began my residence at Oxford, at Easter 1846, as a Scholar of Corpus Christi College, I quickly made the acquaintance of the late Hugh Edwin Strickland, F.R.S., who was at that time living at Oxford and giving lectures there as Reader in Geology. When not engaged with his lectures Strickland was at the Radcliffe Library nearly every day, at work on his 'Ornithological Synonyms,' as he proposed to call his book on the nomenclature of Birds †. We soon became great friends, and remained so until his much lamented death by a railway accident in 1853. In fact Strickland was my master and instructor in all matters

\* Règles Internationales de la Nomenclature Zoologique adoptées par les Congrès Internationaux de Zoologie. Paris, 1905.

† This work was left incomplete at Strickland's death. The first part of it, containing the synonymy of the Accipitres, was printed and published by Van Voorst (in 1855), edited by Mrs. Hugh Strickland and Sir William Jardine. The MS. of the rest of the work is at Cambridge along with the Strickland Collection and Library.

regarding ornithology, and I always endeavoured to follow his excellent advice.

As with the authors of the present '*Hand-list*' so with Strickland, "Priority" was the foundation of his work. He rightly maintained that the only mode of attaining unanimity in nomenclature was the rule of priority, but he did not carry his views on the subject quite so far as some of our friends do at the present time.

In July 1841, Strickland wrote to his father-in-law, Sir William Jardine, as follows:—

"I have some thought of moving in the Zoological section of the British Association (at Plymouth) for the appointment of a Committee to prepare a set of regulations with the view of establishing a permanent system of Zoological Nomenclature." This plan, which was also communicated to Darwin, Sir John Richardson, Leonard Jenyns, Prince Charles Bonaparte, and other good friends, met with universal approval. As proposed by Strickland it was brought before the British Association at the Plymouth Meeting, and a Committee, consisting of Mr. Darwin, Prof. Henslow, Rev. L. Jenyns, Mr. Ogilby, Mr. J. Phillips, Dr. Richardson, Mr. Strickland, and Mr. J. O. Westwood, was appointed "to consider the rules by which the nomenclature of Zoology may be established on a uniform basis." The names of Mr. W. J. Broderip, Prof. Owen, Mr. W. E. Shuckard, Mr. G. R. Waterhouse, and Mr. Yarrell were afterwards added to the Committee. The subject was well considered by this select Committee under the guidance of Strickland, who was appointed Secretary. The Report of the Committee, which I believe was mainly (if not entirely) prepared by Strickland, was presented to the meeting of the British Association at Manchester. This Report is commonly known as the '*Stricklandian Code*,' and was printed in the eleventh volume of the Reports of the British Association (1842), and in Sir William Jardine's volume of '*Memoirs of Strickland*.'\*

\* '*Memoirs of Hugh Edwin Strickland, M.A., F.R.S., Deputy Reader of Geology in Oxford.*' By Sir William Jardine, Bart. London: Van Voorst, 1858.

Two other editions of the 'Stricklandian Code of Nomenclature' were subsequently printed and published by the British Association: the first, edited by Sir William Jardine, in 1865, and the second, edited by myself, in 1878\*. The history of these two editions and a general account of the whole literature of the subject will be found in a paper which was read before the Zoological Society of London in 1896†. From what I have there stated, and from the list of the titles of the various Codes of Nomenclature there given, it will be evident that it is not correct to say that the study of Zoological Nomenclature has been neglected during the past 150 years. On the contrary, much has been written about this subject, and a large number of our leading zoologists have given it their best attention. But in the 'Hand-list' it is proposed to throw over all that has been done in this country, and to adopt a Code of Rules that contains, in my opinion, some very objectionable features.

I fully admit that it would be of great advantage to the science of zoology to have the same rules of nomenclature in all countries, and the same name for each species. This, no doubt, was one of the principal reasons for the preparation of the new 'Hand-list of British Birds.'

"If the scientific names of Birds were uniform all over the world," the authors truly say, "what an enormous benefit it would be for ornithologists and for science generally." Indeed it would, but the question is, how can such unanimity be obtained? As already shewn, we have in England a set of scientific names for our birds based on the Stricklandian Code, and familiar to us from their usage in such works as those of Yarrell, Newton, and Saunders.

\* This is the title of the edition of 1878:—'Rules for Zoological Nomenclature drawn up by the late H. E. Strickland, M.A., F.R.S. (assisted by many Zoologists, British and Foreign), at the instance of the British Association.' London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1878. 8vo. 28 pp.

† "Remarks on the Diversities between the Rules for naming Animals of the German Zoological Society and the Stricklandian Code of Nomenclature," by P. L. Sclater, P. Z. S. 1896, pp. 306-322.

We are now asked by the authors of the 'Hand-list' to throw this system over altogether, and to adopt in its place their system, which is founded on the rules of the International Committee. Now, if there were any means of enforcing such a change on all the ornithologists of the world, this would indeed be a tempting offer. But experience shews us that such an offer would not be accepted because of the enormous changes it would necessitate in our usual nomenclature. Who would like to call the Redwing "*Turdus musicus*," or the Barn-Owl "*Tyto alba*"? Some of our friends will reply "Oh! but they will soon get used to it!" A few of the more ardent and energetic workers in ornithology would, no doubt, after a time get used to it. But how about the large array of journalists, local list-makers, and other occasional writers? They would never adopt the new system, nor even recognize their old favourites disguised under their new names.

In order to shew the changes which would have to be made in the 'B. O. U. List' to bring it into conformity with the new 'Hand-list,' I have prepared the following Table, which shews that out of 376 species included in the 'B. O. U. List,' no less than 200 would require alteration. But I doubt very much whether many of our writers on birds would appreciate this step—or would use the new names; and, if this should turn out to be the case, it seems to me that the introduction of the new names would only aggravate the very evil which it is intended to remedy.

I may now venture to remind those who maintain that no attempt has been made to regulate the nomenclature of birds, that besides the rules of the British Association (which apply to the whole of Zoology) a special committee of the British Ornithologists' Union was appointed in 1878 to which the task of preparing a 'List of British Birds' was entrusted. This committee, of which I had the honour of being chairman, held as many as seventy-one meetings and thoroughly discussed the name of every species, its chief object being to ensure a uniform nomenclature for writers

in 'The Ibis.' It may well claim to have succeeded in this object, as until the last few years the names used by the leading writers on British Birds (Yarrell, Newton, Saunders, and others) were nearly the same as those of the 'B. O. U. List.' After the long interval of nearly thirty years it was obvious that some changes would be necessary, but not such treatment as would revolutionize the whole system previously adopted. Accordingly, at the General Meeting of the B. O. U. in 1910 a "select" committee was appointed to prepare a new edition of our 'List of British Birds,' and before long we may hope to have the benefit of its labours on this important subject.\*

The number of species and subspecies of British birds allowed in the 'Hand-list' is 469. The species are not numbered, but their names are printed in large type, and have no "authority" added to their generic and specific titles. But the "authority" is added in the case of the subspecies, so that every subspecies has four names. I think it would have been better to have omitted the authority altogether in the subspecies. It is not correct to quote the Little Tern (for example) as "*Sterna minuta minuta* L.," for Linnaeus never gave it any such name—he called it simply "*Sterna minuta*." This process is still more objectionable in cases where there are no subspecies. What can be the use of calling the Honey-Buzzard "*Pernis ptilorhynchus ptilorhynchus*"? and in attributing the duplication of the specific term to Linnaeus, who certainly never gave it that name. There are many other similar cases in the synonymy.

Before concluding my remarks I wish to say that, so far as I am able to judge, the new 'Hand-list' has been well and carefully prepared. I have tried many of the references, and have found them correct. Moreover, all the most recent accessions to the British list are properly entered, so that it will be of much use to all students of British ornithology, even though they may not agree with its nomenclature.

\* See the reports of the General Meetings, 'Ibis,' 1911, p. 553, and 1912, p. 529.

COMPARISON of the Names of British Birds according to the LIST OF THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION (1883) with the Names corresponding to them in the 'HAND-LIST' (1912).

N.B.—Where the name in the B. O. U. List is different from that of the Hand-list, the latter name is printed in italics.

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
1.	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i> . . . . .	1	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i> . . . . .	74
2.	<i>Turdus musicus</i> . . . . .	1	<i>Turdus philomelus</i> . . . . .	75
3.	<i>Turdus iliacus</i> . . . . .	2	<i>Turdus musicus</i> . . . . .	76
4.	<i>Turdus pilaris</i> . . . . .	2	<i>Turdus pilaris</i> . . . . .	71
5.	<i>Turdus atrigularis</i> . . . . .	3	<i>Turdus ruficollis</i> . . . . .	77
6.	<i>Turdus varius</i> . . . . .	3	<i>Turdus dauma</i> . . . . .	73
7.	<i>Turdus merula</i> . . . . .	4	<i>Turdus merula</i> . . . . .	79
8.	<i>Turdus torquatus</i> . . . . .	5	<i>Turdus torquatus</i> . . . . .	77
9.	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i> . . . . .	5	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i> . . . . .	79
10.	<i>Saxicola cinanthe</i> . . . . .	6	<i>Enanthe cinanthe</i> . . . . .	80
11.	<i>Saxicola stapanina</i> . . . . .	6	<i>Enanthe hispanica</i> . . . . .	81
12.	<i>Saxicola deserti</i> . . . . .	7	<i>Enanthe deserti</i> . . . . .	80
13.	<i>Pratincola rubetra</i> . . . . .	7	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i> . . . . .	83
14.	<i>Pratincola rubicola</i> . . . . .	8	<i>Saxicola torquata</i> . . . . .	84
15.	<i>Ruticilla phœnicurus</i> . . . . .	8	<i>Phœnicurus phœnicurus</i> . . . . .	85
16.	<i>Ruticilla titys</i> . . . . .	9	<i>Phœnicurus ochrurus</i> . . . . .	85
17.	<i>Cyanecula wolff</i> . . . . .	9	<i>Luscinia cyanecula</i> . . . . .	88
18.	<i>Cyanecula suecica</i> . . . . .	10	<i>Luscinia suecica</i> . . . . .	88
19.	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i> . . . . .	10	<i>Dandalus rubecula</i> . . . . .	89
20.	<i>Daulias luscinia</i> . . . . .	11	<i>Luscinia megarhyncha</i> . . . . .	86
21.	<i>Sylvia cinerea</i> . . . . .	11	<i>Sylvia communis</i> . . . . .	69
22.	<i>Sylvia curruca</i> . . . . .	12	<i>Sylvia curruca</i> . . . . .	70
23.	<i>Sylvia orphea</i> . . . . .	12	<i>Sylvia hortensis</i> . . . . .	67
24.	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> . . . . .	12	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> . . . . .	69
25.	<i>Sylvia hortensis</i> . . . . .	13	<i>Sylvia borin</i> . . . . .	68
26.	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i> . . . . .	13	<i>Sylvia nisoria</i> . . . . .	67
27.	<i>Melizophilus undatus</i> . . . . .	14	<i>Sylvia undata</i> . . . . .	72
28.	<i>Regulus cristatus</i> . . . . .	14	<i>Regulus regulus</i> . . . . .	48
29.	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i> . . . . .	15	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i> . . . . .	49
30.	<i>Phylloscopus superciliosus</i> . . . . .	15	<i>Phylloscopus superciliosus</i> . . . . .	60
31.	<i>Phylloscopus rufus</i> . . . . .	16	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> . . . . .	56
32.	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> . . . . .	16	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i> . . . . .	57
33.	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> . . . . .	17	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i> . . . . .	59
34.	<i>Hypolais icterina</i> . . . . .	17	<i>Hypolais icterina</i> . . . . .	66
35.	<i>Aëdon galactodes</i> . . . . .	18	<i>Agrobates galactodes</i> . . . . .	72
36.	<i>Acrocephalus streperus</i> . . . . .	18	<i>Acrocephalus streperus</i> . . . . .	63
37.	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i> . . . . .	19	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i> . . . . .	64
38.	<i>Acrocephalus turdoides</i> . . . . .	19	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i> . . . . .	63
39.	<i>Acrocephalus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	20	<i>Acrocephalus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	65

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
40.	<i>Acrocephalus phragmitis</i> . . . . .	20	<i>Acrocephalus schænobænus</i> . . . . .	65
41.	<i>Locustella naevia</i> . . . . .	20	<i>Locustella naevia</i> . . . . .	62
42.	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i> . . . . .	21	<i>Locustella luscinioides</i> . . . . .	61
43.	<i>Accentor modularis</i> . . . . .	22	<i>Prunella modularis</i> . . . . .	90
44.	<i>Accentor collaris</i> . . . . .	23	<i>Prunella collaris</i> . . . . .	90
45.	<i>Cinclus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	23	<i>Cinclus britannicus</i> . . . . .	92
46.	<i>Cinclus melanogaster</i> . . . . .	24	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i> . . . . .	92
47.	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i> . . . . .	24	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i> . . . . .	49
48.	<i>Acredula caudata</i> . . . . .	25	<i>Ægithalus caudatus</i> . . . . .	47
49.	<i>Acredula rosea</i> . . . . .	25	<i>Ægithalus caudatus roseus</i> . . . . .	47
50.	<i>Parus major</i> . . . . .	26	<i>Parus major</i> . . . . .	42
51.	<i>Parus ater</i> . . . . .	26	<i>Parus ater</i> . . . . .	44
52.	<i>Parus britannicus</i> . . . . .	26	<i>Parus britannicus</i> . . . . .	44
53.	<i>Parus palustris</i> . . . . .	27	<i>Parus palustris</i> . . . . .	46
54.	<i>Parus caeruleus</i> . . . . .	27	<i>Parus caeruleus</i> . . . . .	43
55.	<i>Parus cristatus</i> . . . . .	28	<i>Parus cristatus</i> . . . . .	45
56.	<i>Sitta casia</i> . . . . .	28	<i>Sitta europæa</i> . . . . .	42
57.	<i>Troglodytes parvulus</i> . . . . .	29	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> . . . . .	91
58.	<i>Motacilla alba</i> . . . . .	29	<i>Motacilla alba</i> . . . . .	40
59.	<i>Motacilla lugubris</i> . . . . .	30	<i>Motacilla lugubris</i> . . . . .	39
60.	<i>Motacilla melanope</i> . . . . .	30	<i>Motacilla boarula</i> . . . . .	39
61.	<i>Motacilla flava</i> . . . . .	31	<i>Motacilla flava</i> . . . . .	36
62.	<i>Motacilla rayi</i> . . . . .	31	<i>Motacilla rayi</i> . . . . .	38
63.	<i>Anthus pratensis</i> . . . . .	32	<i>Anthus pratensis</i> . . . . .	33
64.	<i>Anthus trivialis</i> . . . . .	33	<i>Anthus trivialis</i> . . . . .	33
65.	<i>Anthus campestris</i> . . . . .	33	<i>Anthus campestris</i> . . . . .	33
66.	<i>Anthus richardi</i> . . . . .	34	<i>Anthus richardi</i> . . . . .	32
67.	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i> . . . . .	34	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i> . . . . .	35
68.	<i>Anthus obscurus</i> . . . . .	35	<i>Anthus obscurus</i> . . . . .	36
69.	<i>Oriolus galbula</i> . . . . .	36	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i> . . . . .	7
70.	<i>Lanius excubitor</i> . . . . .	37	<i>Lanius excubitor</i> . . . . .	50
71.	<i>Lanius major</i> . . . . .	37	<i>Lanius excubitor</i> . . . . .	50
72.	<i>Lanius minor</i> . . . . .	38	<i>Lanius minor</i> . . . . .	50
73.	<i>Lanius collurio</i> . . . . .	38	<i>Lanius collurio</i> . . . . .	52
74.	<i>Lanius pomeranus</i> . . . . .	38	<i>Lanius senator</i> . . . . .	51
75.	<i>Ampelis garrulus</i> . . . . .	39	<i>Ampelis garrulus</i> . . . . .	53
76.	<i>Muscicapa grisola</i> . . . . .	40	<i>Muscicapa striata</i> . . . . .	53
77.	<i>Muscicapa atricapilla</i> . . . . .	41	<i>Muscicapa hypoleuca</i> . . . . .	54
78.	<i>Muscicapa parva</i> . . . . .	42	<i>Muscicapa parva</i> . . . . .	55
79.	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> . . . . .	42	<i>Chelidon rustica</i> . . . . .	93
80.	<i>Chelidon urbana</i> . . . . .	44	<i>Hirundo urbana</i> . . . . .	94
81.	<i>Cotile riparia</i> . . . . .	44	<i>Riparia riparia</i> . . . . .	95
82.	<i>Certhia familiaris</i> . . . . .	45	<i>Certhia familiaris</i> . . . . .	11
83.	<i>Carduelis elegans</i> . . . . .	47	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i> . . . . .	9
84.	<i>Chrysomitris spinus</i> . . . . .	48	<i>Carduelis spinus</i> . . . . .	10
85.	<i>Serinus hortulanus</i> . . . . .	49	<i>Serinus canarius</i> . . . . .	14
86.	<i>Ligurius chloris</i> . . . . .	49	<i>Chloris chloris</i> . . . . .	8
87.	<i>Coccothraustes vulgaris</i> . . . . .	50	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> . . . . .	8
88.	<i>Passer domesticus</i> . . . . .	51	<i>Passer domesticus</i> . . . . .	21
89.	<i>Passer montanus</i> . . . . .	51	<i>Passer montanus</i> . . . . .	21



No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
90.	<i>Fringilla cœlebs</i> . . . . .	52	<i>Fringilla cœlebs</i> . . . . .	19
91.	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> . . . . .	52	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> . . . . .	20
92.	<i>Linota cannabina</i> . . . . .	53	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i> . . . . .	14
93.	<i>Linota linaria</i> . . . . .	53	<i>Carduelis linaria</i> . . . . .	11
94.	<i>Linota rufescens</i> . . . . .	54	<i>Carduelis linaria cabaret</i> . . . . .	12
95.	<i>Linota hornemanni</i> . . . . .	54	<i>Carduelis hornemanni</i> . . . . .	13
96.	<i>Linota flavirostris</i> . . . . .	54	<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i> . . . . .	10
97.	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i> . . . . .	55	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i> . . . . .	16
98.	<i>Pyrrhula europæa</i> . . . . .	56	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> . . . . .	15
99.	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i> . . . . .	56	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i> . . . . .	16
100.	<i>Loxia pityopsittacus</i> . . . . .	57	<i>Loxia pityopsittacus</i> . . . . .	18
101.	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i> . . . . .	57	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i> . . . . .	17
102.	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i> . . . . .	58	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i> . . . . .	19
103.	<i>Loxia bifasciata</i> . . . . .	58	<i>Loxia bifasciata</i> . . . . .	19
104.	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> . . . . .	59	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> . . . . .	23
105.	<i>Emberiza miliaria</i> . . . . .	59	<i>Emberiza caudata</i> . . . . .	22
106.	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i> . . . . .	60	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i> . . . . .	22
107.	<i>Emberiza cirrus</i> . . . . .	60	<i>Emberiza cirrus</i> . . . . .	24
108.	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i> . . . . .	61	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i> . . . . .	24
109.	<i>Emberiza rustica</i> . . . . .	61	<i>Emberiza rustica</i> . . . . .	25
110.	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i> . . . . .	61	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i> . . . . .	25
111.	<i>Emberiza schœnielus</i> . . . . .	62	<i>Emberiza schœnielus</i> . . . . .	26
112.	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i> . . . . .	62	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i> . . . . .	27
113.	<i>Plectrophanes nivalis</i> . . . . .	63	<i>Plectrophanes nivalis</i> . . . . .	27
114.	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> . . . . .	65	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> . . . . .	6
115.	<i>Pastor roseus</i> . . . . .	66	<i>Pastor roseus</i> . . . . .	7
116.	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i> . . . . .	66	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i> . . . . .	6
117.	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i> . . . . .	67	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i> . . . . .	4
118.	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i> . . . . .	67	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i> . . . . .	5
119.	<i>Pica rustica</i> . . . . .	68	<i>Pica pica</i> . . . . .	3
120.	<i>Corvus monedula</i> . . . . .	68	<i>Corvus monedula</i> . . . . .	3
121.	<i>Corvus corone</i> . . . . .	69	<i>Corvus corone</i> . . . . .	2
122.	<i>Corvus cornix</i> . . . . .	69	<i>Corvus cornix</i> . . . . .	1
123.	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i> . . . . .	70	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i> . . . . .	2
124.	<i>Corvus corax</i> . . . . .	70	<i>Corvus corax</i> . . . . .	1
125.	<i>Alauda arvensis</i> . . . . .	71	<i>Alauda arvensis</i> . . . . .	31
126.	<i>Alauda arborea</i> . . . . .	71	<i>Lalula arborea</i> . . . . .	30
127.	<i>Alauda cristata</i> . . . . .	71	<i>Galerida cristata</i> . . . . .	29
128.	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i> . . . . .	72	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i> . . . . .	29
129.	<i>Melanocorypha sibirica</i> . . . . .	73	<i>Melanocorypha sibirica</i> . . . . .	28
130.	<i>Otocorys alpestris</i> . . . . .	73	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i> . . . . .	32
131.	<i>Cypselus apus</i> . . . . .	74	<i>Apus apus</i> . . . . .	35
132.	<i>Cypselus melba</i> . . . . .	74	<i>Apus melba</i> . . . . .	35
133.	<i>Acanthyllis caudacuta</i> . . . . .	74	<i>Chatura caudacuta</i> . . . . .	36
134.	<i>Caprimulgus europæus</i> . . . . .	75	<i>Caprimulgus europæus</i> . . . . .	36
135.	<i>Caprimulgus ruficollis</i> . . . . .	75	<i>Caprimulgus ruficollis</i> . . . . .	37
136.	<i>Dendrocopus major</i> . . . . .	77	<i>Dryobates major</i> . . . . .	100
137.	<i>Dendrocopus minor</i> . . . . .	78	<i>Dryobates minor</i> . . . . .	101
138.	<i>Gecinus viridis</i> . . . . .	79	<i>Picus viridis</i> . . . . .	100
139.	<i>Lynx torquilla</i> . . . . .	80	<i>Lynx torquilla</i> . . . . .	102

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
140.	<i>Alcedo ispida</i> . . . . .	80	<i>Alcedo ispida</i> . . . . .	99
141.	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i> . . . . .	81	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i> . . . . .	99
142.	<i>Coracias garrula</i> . . . . .	82	<i>Coracias garrulus</i> . . . . .	99
143.	<i>Merops apiaster</i> . . . . .	82	<i>Merops apiaster</i> . . . . .	98
144.	<i>Upupa epops</i> . . . . .	83	<i>Upupa epops</i> . . . . .	98
145.	<i>Cuculus canorus</i> . . . . .	83	<i>Cuculus canorus</i> . . . . .	102
146.	<i>Coccyzus glandarius</i> . . . . .	84	<i>Clamator glandarius</i> . . . . .	103
147.	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i> . . . . .	84	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i> . . . . .	103
148.	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> . . . . .	85	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> . . . . .	104
149.	<i>Strix flammea</i> . . . . .	85	<i>Tyto alba</i> . . . . .	108
150.	<i>Asio otus</i> . . . . .	86	<i>Asio otus</i> . . . . .	107
151.	<i>Asio brachyotus</i> . . . . .	86	<i>Asio flammeus</i> . . . . .	107
152.	<i>Syrnium aluco</i> . . . . .	87	<i>Strix aluco</i> . . . . .	109
153.	<i>Nyctea scandiaca</i> . . . . .	87	<i>Nyctea nyctea</i> . . . . .	104
154.	<i>Surnia ulula</i> . . . . .	88	<i>Surnia ulula</i> . . . . .	105
155.	<i>Surnia funerea</i> . . . . .	88	<i>Surnia ulula caparoch</i> . . . . .	105
156.	<i>Nyctala tengmalmi</i> . . . . .	88	<i>Ægolius tengmalmi</i> . . . . .	105
157.	<i>Scops giu</i> . . . . .	89	<i>Otus scops</i> . . . . .	108
158.	<i>Bubo ignavus</i> . . . . .	90	<i>Bubo bubo</i> . . . . .	107
159.	<i>Athene noctua</i> . . . . .	91	<i>Athene noctua</i> . . . . .	106
160.	<i>Gyps fulvus</i> . . . . .	91	<i>Gyps fulvus</i> . . . . .	120
161.	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i> . . . . .	92	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i> . . . . .	120
162.	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i> . . . . .	92	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i> . . . . .	116
163.	<i>Circus cyaneus</i> . . . . .	93	<i>Circus cyaneus</i> . . . . .	117
164.	<i>Circus cineraceus</i> . . . . .	93	<i>Circus pygargus</i> . . . . .	117
165.	<i>Buteo vulgaris</i> . . . . .	94	<i>Buteo buteo</i> . . . . .	115
166.	<i>Archibuteo lagopus</i> . . . . .	95	<i>Buteo lagopus</i> . . . . .	115
167.	<i>Aquila clanga</i> . . . . .	96	<i>Aquila maculata</i> . . . . .	114
168.	<i>Aquila chrysaëtus</i> . . . . .	96	<i>Aquila chrysaëtus</i> . . . . .	114
169.	<i>Haliaëtus albicilla</i> . . . . .	97	<i>Haliaëtus albicilla</i> . . . . .	116
170.	<i>Astur palumbarius</i> . . . . .	97	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i> . . . . .	117
171.	<i>Astur atricapillus</i> . . . . .	98	<i>Acc. gentilis atricapillus</i> . . . . .	118
172.	<i>Accipiter nisus</i> . . . . .	98	<i>Accipiter nisus</i> . . . . .	118
173.	<i>Milvus ietinus</i> . . . . .	99	<i>Milvus milvus</i> . . . . .	118
174.	<i>Milvus migrans</i> . . . . .	99	<i>Milvus korschun</i> . . . . .	119
175.	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i> . . . . .	100	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i> . . . . .	119
176.	<i>Pernis apivorus</i> . . . . .	100	<i>Pernis apivorus</i> . . . . .	119
177.	<i>Hierofalco gyrfalco</i> . . . . .	101	<i>Falco rusticolus</i> . . . . .	110
178.	<i>Hierofalco candicans</i> . . . . .	101	<i>Falco rusticolus candicans</i> . . . . .	110
179.	<i>Hierofalco islandus</i> . . . . .	102	<i>Falco rusticolus islandus</i> . . . . .	110
180.	<i>Falco peregrinus</i> . . . . .	102	<i>Falco peregrinus</i> . . . . .	111
181.	<i>Falco subbuteo</i> . . . . .	102	<i>Falco subbuteo</i> . . . . .	112
182.	<i>Falco aesalon</i> . . . . .	103	<i>Falco reppus</i> . . . . .	112
183.	<i>Tinnunculus vespertinus</i> . . . . .	103	<i>Falco vespertinus</i> . . . . .	113
184.	<i>Tinnunculus alaudarius</i> . . . . .	104	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i> . . . . .	113
185.	<i>Tinnunculus cenchris</i> . . . . .	104	<i>Falco naumanni</i> . . . . .	113
186.	<i>Pandion haliaëtus</i> . . . . .	105	<i>Pandion haliaëtus</i> . . . . .	119
187.	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> . . . . .	105	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> . . . . .	148
188.	<i>Phalacrocorax graculus</i> . . . . .	106	<i>Phalacrocorax graculus</i> . . . . .	148
189.	<i>Sula bassana</i> . . . . .	106	<i>Sula bassana</i> . . . . .	148

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
190.	<i>Ardea cinerea</i> .....	107	<i>Ardea cinerea</i> .....	122
191.	<i>Ardea purpurea</i> .....	108	<i>Ardea purpurea</i> .....	123
192.	<i>Ardea alba</i> .....	108	<i>Egretta alba</i> .....	123
193.	<i>Ardea garzetta</i> .....	108	<i>Egretta garzetta</i> .....	124
194.	<i>Ardea bubulens</i> .....	109	<i>Ardeola ibis</i> .....	124
195.	<i>Ardea ralloides</i> .....	109	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i> .....	124
196.	<i>Ardetta minuta</i> .....	110	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i> .....	125
197.	<i>Nycticorax griseus</i> .....	110	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> .....	125
198.	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i> .....	111	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i> .....	125
199.	<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i> .....	111	<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i> .....	126
200.	<i>Ciconia alba</i> .....	112	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i> .....	121
201.	<i>Ciconia nigra</i> .....	112	<i>Ciconia nigra</i> .....	121
202.	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i> .....	113	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i> .....	121
203.	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> .....	113	<i>Egatheus falcinellus</i> .....	122
204.	<i>Anser cinereus</i> .....	115	<i>Anser anser</i> .....	128
205.	<i>Anser segetum</i> .....	115	<i>Anser fabalis</i> .....	129
206.	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> .....	116	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> .....	130
207.	<i>Anser albifrons</i> .....	116	<i>Anser albifrons</i> .....	128
208.	<i>Chen albatrus</i> .....	117	<i>Anser hyperboreus</i> .....	130
209.	<i>Bernicla brenta</i> .....	117	<i>Branta bernicla</i> .....	132
210.	<i>Bernicla leucopsis</i> .....	118	<i>Branta leucopsis</i> .....	132
211.	<i>Bernicla ruficollis</i> .....	119	<i>Branta ruficollis</i> .....	131
212.	<i>Cygnus olor</i> .....	119	<i>Cygnus olor</i> .....	127
213.	<i>Cygnus immutabilis</i> .....	120	<i>Cygnus olor</i> .....	127
214.	<i>Cygnus musicus</i> .....	120	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i> .....	126
215.	<i>Cygnus bewicki</i> .....	121	<i>Cygnus bewickii</i> .....	127
216.	<i>Tadorna cornuta</i> .....	122	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i> .....	134
217.	<i>Tadorna casarca</i> .....	122	<i>Casarca ferruginea</i> .....	134
218.	<i>Mareca penelope</i> .....	123	<i>Anas penelope</i> .....	137
219.	<i>Mareca americana</i> .....	124	<i>Anas americana</i> .....	137
220.	<i>Dafila acuta</i> .....	124	<i>Dafila acuta</i> .....	138
221.	<i>Anas boschas</i> .....	125	<i>Anas platyrhyncha</i> .....	134
222.	<i>Chaulelasmus streperus</i> .....	125	<i>Anas strepera</i> .....	135
223.	<i>Querquedula circia</i> .....	126	<i>Anas querquedula</i> .....	136
224.	<i>Querquedula discors</i> .....	126	<i>Anas discors</i> .....	136
225.	<i>Querquedula crecca</i> .....	127	<i>Anas crecca</i> .....	135
226.	<i>Querquedula carolinensis</i> .....	127	<i>Anas crecca carolinensis</i> .....	136
227.	<i>Spatula clypeata</i> .....	128	<i>Spatula clypeata</i> .....	138
228.	<i>Fuligula rufina</i> .....	128	<i>Nyroca rufina</i> .....	139
229.	<i>Fuligula cristata</i> .....	129	<i>Nyroca fuligula</i> .....	140
230.	<i>Fuligula marila</i> .....	129	<i>Nyroca marila</i> .....	141
231.	<i>Fuligula ferina</i> .....	130	<i>Nyroca ferina</i> .....	139
232.	<i>Nyroca ferruginea</i> .....	130	<i>Nyroca nyroca</i> .....	140
233.	<i>Clangula glaucion</i> .....	131	<i>Nyroca clangula</i> .....	141
234.	<i>Clangula islandica</i> .....	131	<i>Nyroca islandica</i> .....	142
235.	<i>Clangula albeola</i> .....	132	<i>Nyroca albeola</i> .....	142
236.	<i>Cosmonetta histrionica</i> .....	132	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i> .....	143
237.	<i>Harelda glacialis</i> .....	133	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i> .....	142
238.	<i>Heniconetta stelleri</i> .....	133	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i> .....	143
239.	<i>Somateria mollissima</i> .....	134	<i>Somateria mollissima</i> .....	144

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
240.	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i> . . . . .	134	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i> . . . . .	144
241.	<i>Oidemia nigra</i> . . . . .	135	<i>Oidemia nigra</i> . . . . .	145
242.	<i>Oidemia fusca</i> . . . . .	135	<i>Oidemia fusca</i> . . . . .	145
243.	<i>Oidemia perspicillata</i> . . . . .	136	<i>Oidemia perspicillata</i> . . . . .	146
244.	<i>Mergus merganser</i> . . . . .	136	<i>Mergus merganser</i> . . . . .	146
245.	<i>Mergus serrator</i> . . . . .	136	<i>Mergus serrator</i> . . . . .	147
246.	<i>Mergus cucullatus</i> . . . . .	137	<i>Mergus cucullatus</i> . . . . .	147
247.	<i>Mergus albellus</i> . . . . .	137	<i>Mergus albellus</i> . . . . .	147
248.	<i>Columba palumbus</i> . . . . .	138	<i>Columba palumbus</i> . . . . .	160
249.	<i>Columbaenas</i> . . . . .	138	<i>Columbaenas</i> . . . . .	161
250.	<i>Columba livia</i> . . . . .	139	<i>Columba livia</i> . . . . .	161
251.	<i>Turtur communis</i> . . . . .	139	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i> . . . . .	161
252.	<i>Ectopistes migratorius</i> . . . . .	140	(Omitted.)	
253.	<i>Syrhaptes paradoxus</i> . . . . .	140	<i>Syrhaptes paradoxus</i> . . . . .	162
254.	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i> . . . . .	141	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i> . . . . .	216
255.	<i>Caccabis rufa</i> . . . . .	141	<i>Caccabis rufa</i> . . . . .	218
256.	<i>Caccabis petrosa</i> . . . . .	142	(Omitted.)	
257.	<i>Perdix cinerea</i> . . . . .	142	<i>Perdix perdix</i> . . . . .	217
258.	<i>Coturnix communis</i> . . . . .	143	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> . . . . .	217
259.	<i>Lagopus mutus</i> . . . . .	144	<i>Lagopus mutus</i> . . . . .	216
260.	<i>Lagopus scoticus</i> . . . . .	144	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i> . . . . .	216
261.	<i>Tetrao tetrix</i> . . . . .	145	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i> . . . . .	215
262.	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i> . . . . .	145	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i> . . . . .	216
263.	<i>Turnix sylvatica</i> . . . . .	146	<i>Turnix sylvatica</i> . . . . .	215
264.	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	146	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i> . . . . .	214
265.	<i>Porzana maruetta</i> . . . . .	147	<i>Porzana porzana</i> . . . . .	211
266.	<i>Porzana bailloni</i> . . . . .	148	<i>Porzana pusilla</i> . . . . .	213
267.	<i>Porzana parva</i> . . . . .	148	<i>Porzana parva</i> . . . . .	212
268.	<i>Crex pratensis</i> . . . . .	149	<i>Crex crex</i> . . . . .	211
269.	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i> . . . . .	151	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i> . . . . .	214
270.	<i>Fulica atra</i> . . . . .	151	<i>Fulica atra</i> . . . . .	214
271.	<i>Grus communis</i> . . . . .	152	<i>Megalornis grus</i> . . . . .	210
272.	<i>Otis tarda</i> . . . . .	153	<i>Otis tarda</i> . . . . .	209
273.	<i>Otis tetrax</i> . . . . .	154	<i>Otis tetrax</i> . . . . .	209
274.	<i>Houbara macqueeni</i> . . . . .	154	<i>Houbara undulata</i> . . . . .	210
275.	<i>Oedienemus scolopax</i> . . . . .	155	<i>Burhinus oedienemus</i> . . . . .	163
276.	<i>Charadrius pratensis</i> . . . . .	155	<i>Charadrius pratensis</i> . . . . .	164
277.	<i>Cursorius gallicus</i> . . . . .	156	<i>Cursorius gallicus</i> . . . . .	164
278.	<i>Charadrius plumialis</i> . . . . .	157	<i>Charadrius apricarius</i> . . . . .	168
279.	<i>Charadrius fulvus</i> . . . . .	157	<i>Charadrius dominicus</i> . . . . .	169
280.	<i>Squatarola helvetica</i> . . . . .	158	<i>Squatarola squatarola</i> . . . . .	169
281.	<i>Aegialitis cantiana</i> . . . . .	158	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i> . . . . .	167
282.	<i>Aegialitis curonica</i> . . . . .	159	<i>Charadrius dubius</i> . . . . .	167
283.	<i>Aegialitis hiaticula</i> . . . . .	159	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> . . . . .	166
284.	<i>Aegialitis vocifera</i> . . . . .	160	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i> . . . . .	168
285.	<i>Eudromias morinellus</i> . . . . .	160	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i> . . . . .	165
286.	<i>Vanellus vulgaris</i> . . . . .	161	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i> . . . . .	170
287.	<i>Strepsilas interpres</i> . . . . .	161	<i>Arenaria interpres</i> . . . . .	171
288.	<i>Hæmatopus ostralegus</i> . . . . .	162	<i>Hæmatopus ostralegus</i> . . . . .	163
289.	<i>Recurvirostra avocetta</i> . . . . .	162	<i>Recurvirostra avocetta</i> . . . . .	185

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page	Name in Hand-list.	Page
290.	<i>Himantopus candidus</i> . . . . .	163	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i> . . . . .	185
291.	<i>Phalaropus hyperborea</i> . . . . .	164	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i> . . . . .	184
292.	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i> . . . . .	164	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i> . . . . .	184
293.	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i> . . . . .	165	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i> . . . . .	190
294.	<i>Gallinago major</i> . . . . .	165	<i>Gallinago media</i> . . . . .	189
295.	<i>Gallinago cœlestis</i> . . . . .	166	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i> . . . . .	189
296.	<i>Limnocyptes gallinula</i> . . . . .	167	<i>Limnocyptes gallinula</i> . . . . .	190
297.	<i>Limicola platyrhyncha</i> . . . . .	167	<i>Limicola platyrhyncha</i> . . . . .	178
298.	<i>Tringa maculata</i> . . . . .	168	<i>Tringa macularia</i> . . . . .	180
299.	<i>Tringa fuscicollis</i> . . . . .	168	<i>Erolia fuscicollis</i> . . . . .	177
300.	<i>Tringa alpina</i> . . . . .	169	<i>Erolia alpina</i> . . . . .	173
301.	<i>Tringa minuta</i> . . . . .	169	<i>Erolia minuta</i> . . . . .	174
302.	<i>Tringa temmincki</i> . . . . .	169	<i>Erolia temminckii</i> . . . . .	175
303.	<i>Tringa minutilla</i> . . . . .	170	<i>Erolia minutilla</i> . . . . .	175
304.	<i>Tringa subarquata</i> . . . . .	170	<i>Erolia ferruginea</i> . . . . .	174
305.	<i>Tringa striata</i> . . . . .	171	<i>Erolia maritima</i> . . . . .	177
306.	<i>Tringa canutus</i> . . . . .	171	<i>Canutus canutus</i> . . . . .	172
307.	<i>Machetes pugnax</i> . . . . .	171	<i>Machetes pugnax</i> . . . . .	172
308.	<i>Calidris arenaria</i> . . . . .	172	<i>Calidris leucophæa</i> . . . . .	173
309.	<i>Tryngites rufescens</i> . . . . .	172	<i>Erolia subruficollis</i> . . . . .	177
310.	<i>Actiturus longicauda</i> . . . . .	173	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i> . . . . .	171
311.	<i>Tringoides hypoleucus</i> . . . . .	173	<i>Tringa hypoleuca</i> . . . . .	179
312.	<i>Helodromas ochropus</i> . . . . .	174	<i>Tringa ochropus</i> . . . . .	181
313.	<i>Totanus glareola</i> . . . . .	175	<i>Tringa glareola</i> . . . . .	180
314.	<i>Totanus calidris</i> . . . . .	176	<i>Tringa totanus</i> . . . . .	182
315.	<i>Totanus fuscus</i> . . . . .	176	<i>Tringa erythropus</i> . . . . .	183
316.	<i>Totanus canescens</i> . . . . .	176	<i>Tringa nebularia</i> . . . . .	183
317.	<i>Macrorhamphus griseus</i> . . . . .	177	<i>Macrorhamphus griseus</i> . . . . .	179
318.	<i>Limosa lapponica</i> . . . . .	177	<i>Limosa lapponica</i> . . . . .	186
319.	<i>Limosa algocephala</i> . . . . .	178	<i>Limosa limosa</i> . . . . .	186
320.	<i>Numenius borealis</i> . . . . .	178	<i>Numenius borealis</i> . . . . .	188
321.	<i>Numenius phæopus</i> . . . . .	179	<i>Numenius phæopus</i> . . . . .	187
322.	<i>Numenius arquata</i> . . . . .	179	<i>Numenius arquata</i> . . . . .	187
323.	<i>Sterna macrura</i> . . . . .	180	<i>Sterna paradisæa</i> . . . . .	195
324.	<i>Sterna fluviatilis</i> . . . . .	180	<i>Sterna hirsuta</i> . . . . .	194
325.	<i>Sterna dougalli</i> . . . . .	181	<i>Sterna dougallii</i> . . . . .	194
326.	<i>Sterna minuta</i> . . . . .	181	<i>Sterna minuta</i> . . . . .	195
327.	<i>Sterna caspia</i> . . . . .	182	<i>Sterna tschegrava</i> . . . . .	192
328.	<i>Sterna anglica</i> . . . . .	182	<i>Sterna nilotica</i> . . . . .	192
329.	<i>Sterna cantiaca</i> . . . . .	183	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> . . . . .	193
330.	<i>Sterna fuliginosa</i> . . . . .	183	<i>Sterna fuliginosa</i> . . . . .	196
331.	<i>Sterna anæsthera</i> . . . . .	184	<i>Sterna anæsthera</i> . . . . .	196
332.	<i>Hydrochelidon hybrida</i> . . . . .	184	<i>Hydrochelidon leucopareia</i> . . . . .	191
333.	<i>Hydrochelidon leucoptera</i> . . . . .	185	<i>Hydrochelidon leucoptera</i> . . . . .	191
334.	<i>Hydrochelidon nigra</i> . . . . .	185	<i>Hydrochelidon nigra</i> . . . . .	190
335.	<i>Anous stolidus</i> . . . . .	186	<i>Anous stolidus</i> . . . . .	196
336.	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i> . . . . .	186	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i> . . . . .	203
337.	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i> . . . . .	187	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i> . . . . .	203
338.	<i>Larus glaucus</i> . . . . .	187	<i>Larus glaucus</i> . . . . .	202
339.	<i>Larus leucopterus</i> . . . . .	188	<i>Larus leucopterus</i> . . . . .	202

No.	Name, B. O. U. List.	Page.	Name in Hand-list.	Page.
340.	<i>Larus argentatus</i> .....	188	<i>Larus argentatus</i> .....	200
341.	<i>Larus fuscus</i> .....	189	<i>Larus fuscus</i> .....	201
342.	<i>Larus canus</i> .....	189	<i>Larus canus</i> .....	200
343.	<i>Larus marinus</i> .....	189	<i>Larus marinus</i> .....	202
344.	<i>Larus ichthyaëtus</i> .....	190	<i>Larus ichthyaëtus</i> .....	199
345.	<i>Larus ridibundus</i> .....	191	<i>Larus ridibundus</i> .....	198
346.	<i>Larus minutus</i> .....	191	<i>Larus minutus</i> .....	198
347.	<i>Xema sabinii</i> .....	191	<i>Xema sabinii</i> .....	197
348.	<i>Stercorarius catarrhactes</i> .....	194	<i>Stercorarius skua</i> .....	204
349.	<i>Stercorarius pomatorhinus</i> ..	194	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> .....	204
350.	<i>Stercorarius crepidatus</i> .....	195	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> .....	205
351.	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i> .....	195	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i> .....	205
352.	<i>Procellaria pelagica</i> .....	196	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> .....	149
353.	<i>Procellaria leucorrhœa</i> .....	196	<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i> .....	149
354.	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i> .....	197	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i> .....	150
355.	<i>Puffinus anglorum</i> .....	197	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i> .....	153
356.	<i>Puffinus griseus</i> .....	198	<i>Puffinus griseus</i> .....	152
357.	<i>Puffinus major</i> .....	198	<i>Puffinus gravis</i> .....	152
358.	<i>Puffinus obscurus</i> .....	198	<i>Puffinus obscurus</i> .....	151
359.	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> .....	199	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i> .....	155
360.	<i>Estrelata hesitata</i> .....	200	<i>Pterodroma hasitata</i> .....	154
361.	<i>Bulweria columbina</i> .....	200	<i>Bulweria bulwerii</i> .....	155
362.	<i>Colymbus glacialis</i> .....	201	<i>Gavia immer</i> .....	159
363.	<i>Colymbus arcticus</i> .....	201	<i>Gavia arctica</i> .....	159
364.	<i>Colymbus septentrionalis</i> ..	202	<i>Gavia stellata</i> .....	160
365.	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i> .....	202	<i>Colymbus cristatus</i> .....	156
366.	<i>Podiceps griseigena</i> .....	203	<i>Colymbus griseigena</i> .....	157
367.	<i>Podiceps auritus</i> .....	203	<i>Colymbus auritus</i> .....	157
368.	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i> .....	204	<i>Colymbus nigricollis</i> .....	158
369.	<i>Tachybaptus fluviatilis</i> .....	204	<i>Colymbus ruficollis</i> .....	158
370.	<i>Alca torda</i> .....	205	<i>Alca torda</i> .....	206
371.	<i>Alca impennis</i> .....	206	<i>Alca impennis</i> .....	206
372.	<i>Lomvia troile</i> .....	206	<i>Uria troile</i> .....	206
373.	<i>Lomvia bruennichi</i> .....	207	<i>Uria lomvia</i> .....	207
374.	<i>Uria grylle</i> .....	207	<i>Uria grylle</i> .....	207
375.	<i>Mergulus alle</i> .....	208	<i>Alle alle</i> .....	208
376.	<i>Fratercula arctica</i> .....	208	<i>Fratercula arctica</i> .....	208

It will be seen by this Comparative List that of the 376 names comprised in the 'B. O. U. List' more than one-half would have to be altered in order to bring the 'B. O. U. List' into conformity with the 'Hand-list.' This is, as I consider, so great a defect in the projected change that, in my opinion, the alterations could not be effected, even if other matters could be satisfactorily arranged. It is possible, however, that the Committee of the B. O. U. now at work on Nomenclature